



Pharmaceuticals for Rare Diseases

OPI Group

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Lyon, France and Rochester, USA, June 30, 2004. OPI and Vaccinex announced today a strategic collaboration to discover and develop novel monoclonal antibodies for the treatment of certain rare haematological diseases. Vaccinex will use its proprietary antibody discovery technologies to create fully human antibodies with the same specificity and function as OPI's panel of existing mouse monoclonal antibodies, some of which have already shown promising results in human trials. Under the agreement, Vaccinex will have the opportunity to participate as a co-development partner in certain markets.

Using its proprietary vaccinia vector technology, Vaccinex has developed unique library-based antibody discovery platforms capable of directly expressing bivalent, fully human antibodies in mammalian cells. Unlike antibody systems utilizing phage display libraries or transgenic mice, Vaccinex's technology offers the potential to directly generate fully functional antibodies against difficult targets such as homologous proteins and multi-pass membrane receptors. In addition, Vaccinex's technology can be used to fully humanize mouse and other non-human antibodies.

"We are excited about this collaboration with Vaccinex", said Gilles Alberici, CEO, President and founder of OPI. "Since OPI's inception four years ago, we have demonstrated our ability to grow in developing new compounds. Vaccinex's innovative antibody discovery technology will enable us to make a technological leap to develop new fully human antibodies aiming at treating haematological diseases."

Maurice Zauderer, President and CEO of Vaccinex commented, "We are very enthusiastic about applying our antibody discovery competencies to promote the development of new treatments for blood-based cancers and other diseases. We are pleased to be working with OPI's dedicated group of scientists, physicians and pharmacists to successfully bring product candidates into clinical development."

OPI, Pharmaceuticals for Rare Diseases

Founded in 1999, OPI is a European integrated biopharmaceutical company whose mission is to develop and market pharmaceuticals aimed at treating patients suffering from rare and severe diseases. The company has already one product approved in Europe and several products under clinical development. Innovation and medical needs are the mainstays of OPI's approach. For additional information, please visit the company's website at www.orphan-opi.com.

Vaccinex

Vaccinex is a privately held biotechnology company engaged in the discovery and development of novel therapeutic antibodies. The company is leveraging the capabilities of its proprietary antibody technology to develop its own pipeline of therapeutic antibody products, while using near-term revenues from antibody discovery collaborations to help support its operating costs. The firm is headquartered in Rochester, New York and currently has 37 employees. For additional information, please visit the company's website at www.vaccinex.com.

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